

Attrition among full-time public and private school teachers

Teacher attrition is the largest single factor determining the demand for additional teachers in the Nation's schools. Patterns of attrition vary considerably according to the age of teachers and the destination of those leaving. While the rate of teacher attrition is not as high today as it was in the 1960s and 1970s, it is still important to study attrition patterns and their implications for the Nation's future need for teachers as the current teacher work force ages.

- Six percent of full-time public school teachers and 10 percent of full-time private school teachers who taught during the 1993–94 school year left teaching before the 1994–95 school year. Attrition rates between the 1993–94 and 1994–95 school years for both full-time public and private school teachers were similar to the attrition rates between the 1987–88 and 1988–89 school years.
- For public school teachers who left teaching between the 1993–94 and 1994–95 school years, the destination of leavers reported most was retirement. In fact, during that period, 3 out of 10 public school teachers who left teaching did so to retire.
- For private school teachers who left teaching between the 1993–94 and 1994–95 school years, the destination of leavers reported most was to pursue a career outside of education. Between the 1993–94 and 1994–95 school years, 33 percent of private school teachers left teaching to pursue a career outside of education.
- Attrition was highest among older teachers (those age 60 and older). Among young teachers (those younger than 25), attrition was far higher in private than in public schools (see supplemental table 59-1).

Change in teaching status of full-time teachers between the 1987–88 and 1988–89, 1990–91 and 1991–92, and 1993–94 and 1994–95 school years, and destination of leavers, by control of school

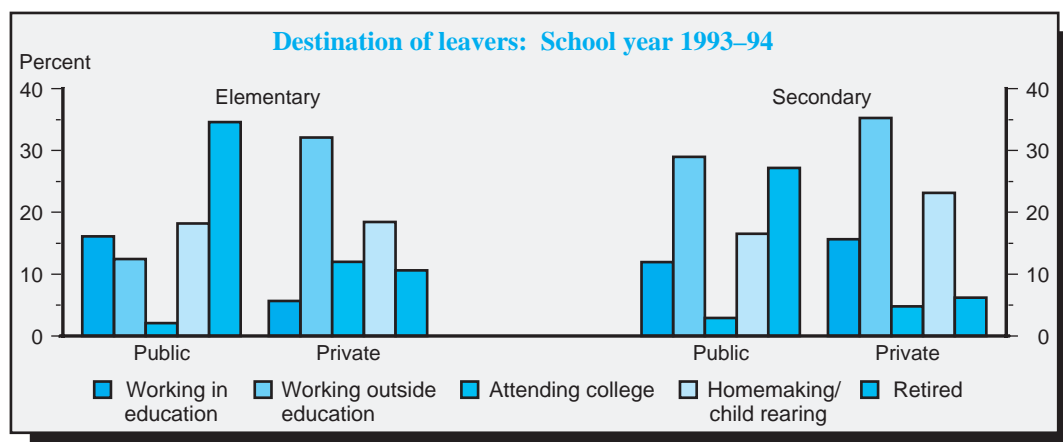
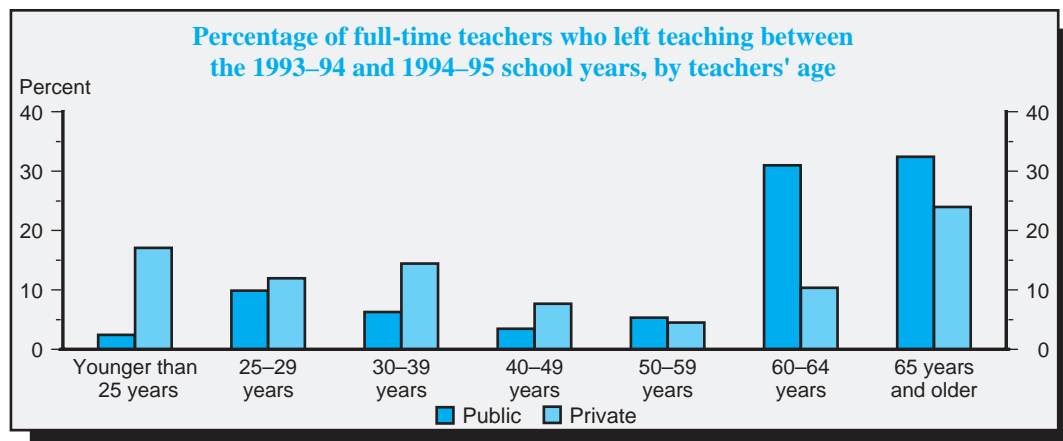
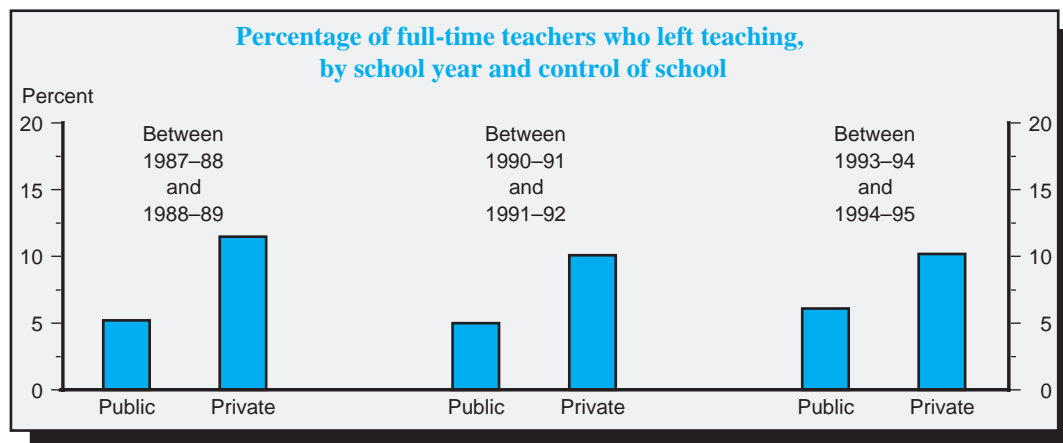
Teaching status and destination of leavers	Public			Private		
	Between 1987–88 and 1988–89	Between 1990–91 and 1991–92	Between 1993–94 and 1994–95	Between 1987–88 and 1988–89	Between 1990–91 and 1991–92	Between 1993–94 and 1994–95
Teaching status						
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Left teaching	5.2	5.0	6.1	11.5	10.1	10.2
Moved to another school	7.6	6.7	6.7	10.1	6.8	6.0
Teaching at same school	87.2	88.3	87.2	78.4	83.1	83.8
Destination of leavers						
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Working in education	15.6	14.1	14.0	10.3	6.8	9.7
Working outside education	17.0	13.4	21.0	37.6	34.8	33.4
Attending college	5.5	6.7	2.5	6.9	12.1	9.1
Homemaking/child rearing	27.4	18.7	17.3	28.8	19.7	20.3
Retired	27.3	34.9	30.8	5.2	8.3	8.9
Disabled	0.8	0.8	1.9	(*)	0.4	0.9
Other	6.6	11.3	12.4	10.7	18.0	17.7

* Too few sample observations for a reliable estimate.

NOTE: Details may not add to totals due to rounding. See supplemental tables 59-2 and 59-3 for data on part-time teachers.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1987–88, 1990–91, and 1993–94, and the Teacher Follow-up Survey, 1988–89, 1991–92, and 1994–95.

Full-time teachers who left teaching



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1987-88, 1990-91, and 1993-94, and the Teacher Follow-up Survey, 1988-89, 1991-92, and 1994-95.

Table 59-1 **Change in teaching status of full-time teachers between the 1993–94 and 1994–95 school years, by control of school and age of teacher**

Age of teacher	Public				Private			
	Percentage distribution	Teaching at same school	Moved to another school	Left teaching	Percentage distribution	Teaching at same school	Moved to another school	Left teaching
Total	100.0	87.2	6.7	6.1	100.0	83.8	6.0	10.2
Younger than 25	1.5	83.2	14.4	2.4	4.1	69.7	13.2	17.1
25–29	9.9	76.6	13.5	9.9	14.8	77.5	10.5	12.0
30–39	23.7	85.7	8.0	6.3	24.8	77.5	8.1	14.5
40–49	39.9	91.1	5.4	3.5	34.8	88.2	4.1	7.7
50–59	21.6	90.1	4.5	5.4	16.7	93.1	2.4	4.5
60–64	2.6	67.4	1.6	31.0	3.4	87.6	(*)	10.4
65 and older	0.7	64.8	(*)	32.4	1.4	73.6	(*)	24.0

* Too few sample observations for a reliable estimate.

NOTE: Details may not add to totals due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993–94, and the Teacher Follow-up Survey, 1994–95.

Table 59-2 Change in teaching status of teachers between the 1993–94 and 1994–95 school years, destination of leavers, and reasons for leaving, by control of school and work status

Teaching status, destination, and reasons for leaving	Public			Private		
	Total	Full time	Part time ¹	Total	Full time	Part time ¹
Teaching status						
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Left teaching	6.6	6.1	11.1	11.9	10.2	18.8
Moved to another school	7.2	6.7	12.1	5.8	6.0	4.8
Teaching at same school	86.3	87.2	76.8	82.3	83.8	76.4
Destination of leavers						
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Working in education	21.1	14.0	60.0	11.9	9.7	16.8
Working outside education	20.3	21.0	16.7	34.1	33.4	35.5
Attending college	2.4	2.5	1.6	8.6	9.1	7.4
Homemaking/child rearing	16.2	17.3	9.9	17.1	20.3	10.2
Retired	27.0	30.8	6.6	10.8	8.9	14.9
Disabled	1.7	1.9	(²)	1.8	0.9	(²)
Other	11.3	12.4	5.1	15.7	17.7	11.6
Reasons for leaving						
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Family or personal move	10.1	11.4	2.6	16.2	18.9	10.5
Pregnancy/child rearing	14.3	15.6	7.3	10.2	12.1	6.1
Health	4.7	5.3	1.4	4.0	2.3	7.6
Retirement	27.3	31.0	7.4	9.3	5.7	17.1
To pursue another career	12.1	7.3	38.1	16.3	15.5	18.0
For better salary or benefits	6.5	6.1	8.4	7.7	7.1	9.0
To take courses to improve career opportunities in the field of education	6.1	3.6	19.6	6.3	6.6	5.5
To take courses to improve career opportunities outside the field of education	0.5	0.6	(²)	0.8	(²)	(²)
School staffing action	3.2	2.9	4.3	8.2	6.4	12.2
To take a sabbatical or other break from teaching	3.4	3.7	1.8	4.9	6.8	0.9
Dissatisfied with teaching as a career	5.3	5.3	5.5	5.0	6.4	1.9
Other family or personal reason	6.6	7.2	3.5	11.1	11.9	9.6

¹ Data have high coefficients of variation; interpret with caution.² Too few sample observations for a reliable estimate.

NOTE: Details may not add to totals due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993–94, and the Teacher Follow-up Survey, 1994–95.

Table 59-3 **Change in teaching status of teachers between the 1993–94 and 1994–95 school years, destination of leavers, and selected reasons for leaving, by control and level of school and work status**

Teaching status, destination, and selected reasons for leaving	Public			Private		
	Total	Full time	Part time ¹	Total	Full time	Part time ¹
Elementary						
Teaching status						
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Left teaching	6.4	5.8	11.0	11.5	10.3	16.8
Moved to another school	7.6	7.1	11.6	6.1	6.2	5.7
Teaching at same school	86.0	87.1	77.5	82.4	83.5	77.5
Destination of leavers						
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Working in education	25.7	16.1	64.2	8.9	5.7	17.4
Working outside education	12.8	12.5	14.2	30.3	32.1	25.6
Attending college	2.0	2.1	1.4	10.2	12.0	5.4
Homemaking/child rearing	16.8	18.2	11.1	16.2	18.5	10.2
Retired	28.4	34.6	3.3	14.3	10.6	23.9
Disabled	0.5	0.6	(²)	2.3	(²)	(²)
Other	13.9	15.9	5.9	17.8	20.8	10.2
Reasons for leaving						
Retirement	27.4	33.4	3.2	10.6	5.9	22.7
Family or personal move	11.2	13.2	3.2	15.0	18.1	7.0
To pursue another career	14.9	8.4	40.9	16.3	14.1	22.0
Pregnancy/child rearing	16.3	18.5	7.6	13.7	16.4	6.7
Dissatisfied with teaching as a career	2.8	3.0	2.1	4.2	5.7	(²)
Secondary						
Teaching status						
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Teaching at same school	86.6	87.4	75.5	82.2	84.2	75.0
Moved to another school	6.7	6.2	13.1	5.2	5.7	3.7
Left teaching	6.7	6.4	11.4	12.6	10.1	21.3
Destination of leavers						
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Working in education	16.4	11.9	52.0	15.9	15.7	16.2
Working outside education	28.2	29.0	21.5	38.9	35.3	45.0
Attending college	2.8	2.9	1.8	6.5	4.8	9.4
Homemaking/child rearing	15.6	16.5	7.8	18.3	23.2	10.3
Retired	25.6	27.2	12.9	6.2	6.2	6.2
Disabled	2.9	3.2	(²)	(²)	(²)	(²)
Other	8.6	9.2	3.6	13.0	13.0	13.0
Reasons for leaving						
Retirement	27.3	28.7	15.5	7.7	5.3	11.7
Family or personal move	8.9	9.8	1.6	17.7	20.1	13.9
To pursue another career	9.1	6.2	32.8	16.4	17.7	14.1
Pregnancy/child rearing	12.2	12.9	6.8	5.6	5.6	5.6
Dissatisfied with teaching as a career	7.9	7.4	11.9	6.0	7.5	3.5

¹ Data have high coefficients of variation; interpret with caution.

² Too few sample observations for a reliable estimate.

NOTE: Details may not add to totals due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993–94, and the Teacher Follow-up Survey, 1994–95.

Standard Error Tables

Table S59 **Standard errors for the text table in *Indicator 59***

	Public			Private		
	Between 1987–88 and 1988–89	Between 1990–91 and 1991–92	Between 1993–94 and 1994–95	Between 1987–88 and 1988–89	Between 1990–91 and 1991–92	Between 1993–94 and 1994–95
Teaching status and destination of leavers						
Teaching status						
Teaching at same school	0.5	0.5	0.5	1.4	1.1	0.8
Moved to another school	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.8	0.6	0.5
Left teaching	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.9	0.8	0.7
Destination of leavers						
Working in education	2.5	2.2	2.0	2.2	2.1	2.4
Working outside education	1.9	2.2	2.5	3.2	4.1	2.9
Attending college	0.7	1.7	0.6	1.3	3.2	1.8
Homemaking/child rearing	3.6	3.6	2.9	4.1	2.6	2.7
Retired	2.9	2.7	2.4	1.6	2.0	1.5
Disabled	0.2	0.3	0.9	—	0.3	0.4
Other	1.7	2.4	2.9	3.2	3.0	3.1

— Not available.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1987–88, 1990–91, and 1993–94, and the Teacher Follow-up Survey, 1988–89, 1991–92, and 1994–95.